

## Letters to the Editor

## A response to “Cadaveric fungi: Not yet an established forensic tool” [*J Forensic Leg Med* 2008;15:124–5]

Dear Editor,

The article “Cadaveric fungi: Not yet an established forensic tool” written by Menezes et al. [1] states their present knowledge regarding the current position of the forensic mycology in application to the judicial system and we appreciate the same.

It is a well known fact among the forensic learned professionals that forensic entomology, though it is a well established science that helps in estimation of postmortem interval, it too has its own limitations like, where the post-mortem interval cannot be ascertained when only skeletal remains or mummified remains have been recovered [2] or when the body has been recovered from bottom of the well [3] or buried under earth... in those circumstances the forensic pathologist with the help of environmental and medical mycologist can utilize the stage and biological type of fungal growth as a corroborative evidence in estimating the time since death. The authors [1] while commenting on the work done by Hitosugi et al. [3] has liberally written that the findings noted are without any scientific basis and without any appropriate reasoning, but at this point we like to criticize the interpretation done by Menezes et al. We going through the article found out that the time duration for the fungal colonizes recovered from the cadaver, like *Pencillium* sp. and *Aspergillus terrous* were compared with the colonizes of the same species recovered in live circumstances which fairly matched [3]. So there is no question of non scientific reasoning and in appropriate conclusion present over here by the authors [3]. At the same time, it would have been more authenticated if the same species of fungal growth have been recovered by using series of experimental cadaver, exposed to the same environmental conditions as noted in the case [3].

Nevertheless, the authors [2,3] in both of their articles have concluded logically suggesting that fungi can provide a useful means of estimating the minimum interval since death when forensic entomology is not applicable, and thus to include mycology as one of the family member in estimating postmortem interval series of research should be needed to clarify the successive colonization of fungi on cadavers.

The authors [2,3] in their article never have been so generous to compare Forensic Entomology with Cadaveric Mycology which has been ironically highlighted in the article [1]. But we indeed appreciate and add to the thinking of the authors [1] that emphasize must be put in analyzing the fungal growth on human cadavers at different environmental conditions, their biology and behavior in forensic cases, so as to encourage a expert level of competency in the field of Forensic Mycology before including it as a judicial aid.

### References

1. Menezes RG, Kanchan T, Lobo SW. Cadaveric fungi: not yet an established forensic tool. *J Forensic Leg Med* 2008;15(2):124–5.
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